

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

This response incorporates the changes set forth in the previously filed amendment as modified in response to the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment.

Drawings

Corrections have been made to Figures 4 and 4A. These figures have required a change in the bridging paragraph on pages 12-13, in which the reference numeral 64C has been substituted for the reference numeral 62C.

Corrections have also been made to Figures 5A and 8.

The correction to Figure 9 is not understood, since the lower line 42 is already a dashed not a solid line. Therefore no correction has been made to Figure 9.

The draftsman's objections to the drawings appear limited to the quality of the lines and numbers. Apparently these drawings are sufficient for purposes of examination and substitute drawings will be submitted upon receipt of a notice of allowance.

Replacement sheets and sheets showing the drawing changes, and the changes made in response to the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment are contained in an Appendix to this Response. The annotated sheets identify changes made in the original amendment as well as changes made in response to the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment.

Specification

The suggested amendment to the paragraph containing page 9, line 5 is not understood, since it is believed to require that the corners 21 be physically removed, which does not appear to be accurate as discussed in the remainder of this paragraph. This paragraph has, however, been amended in an effort to clarify the description in a manner consistent with the examiner's proposal. In light of the examiner's comments in the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment, the revisions to this paragraph concerning folded material have been removed.

The changes to the paragraph containing page 14, line 8 do not correspond to the changes suggested by the examiner. The changes are believed, however, to better clarify the description and are not inconsistent with the changes proposed by the examiner.

The changes to the paragraph bridging pages 14 and 15 are believed to be consistent with the changes proposed by the examiner, although stitches 162 and 162A are now specifically recited.

The remainder of the specification is believed to comply with 35 USC 112, first paragraph, especially in light of the fact that the claims in this divisional application relate only to the embodiment shown in Fig. 3 and Figs 3A-3F. Although specification may require close attention to detail and close examination of the drawings in conjunction with the language used in this application, the nature of the numerous embodiments depicted herein is believed to account for the complicated nature of this disclosure. Although the undersigned attorney played no part in drafting this specification, it appears to him to be no more unclear, inexact or verbose than other applications of corresponding complexity. It is submitted that the nature of the subject matter that inherently makes garments more difficult to describe than conventional structures.

Claims

Claim 7 has been amended to recite that a sling is attached to an intermediate anchor layer that is in turn fastened to an outer layer. The sling comprises a sling or inner layer detachably coupled to the anchor layer but not to the outer layer. The prior art of record, including the Stevens et al. reference relied upon to reject Claims 7 and 8 under 35 USC 102 (b) does not appear to suggest an anchor layer between the outer layer and the detachable sling. The amendment to claim 7 is also believed to address the rejection of the pending claims under 35 USC 112. The amendment to Claim 7 shows the changes presented in the original response and the corrections suggested by the examiner in the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment.

The only amendment to Claim 8 should now be shown.

New claims 17-19 are directed to the use of different types of fasteners which can either attach the sling to the anchor layer over at least most of the sling (See Figures 3E and 3F) or only adjacent the ends of the sling (See Figures 3C and 3D).

The Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment states that the claims as amendment are not readable on the elected invention. Claim 7 as originally presented in the Preliminary Amendment accompanying this divisional application, and claim 7, as amended, and claims dependent thereon are only readable on the species of Figures 3-3F. In the restriction requirement in the parent application (December 11, 2002) an election of species was required. The species of Figures 3-3F was not elected and the allowed claims do not appear to read on that species. The divisional application was filed in order to obtain protection for this species. As understood by the undersigned attorney, this issue is believed to have been resolved to the examiner's satisfaction in a brief telephone conversation with the examiner on March 27, 2002, and the amendments as presented herein are believed to be directed to the elected invention.

The claims as now amended are believed to be allowable over the art of record, and corrections have been made to the specification and drawings. The issues raised in the Notice of Non-Compliant Amendment have also been addressed to the extent understood by the undersigned attorney. The application is therefore believed to be in condition for allowance and issuance of a Notice of Allowance in response to this amendment is courteously solicited.

Respectfully Submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Robert W. Pitts".

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Appendix

Replacement Sheets containing Figs. 4, 4A, 5 and 8.

Drawing sheets showing corrections in Replacement Sheets.

Figure 4

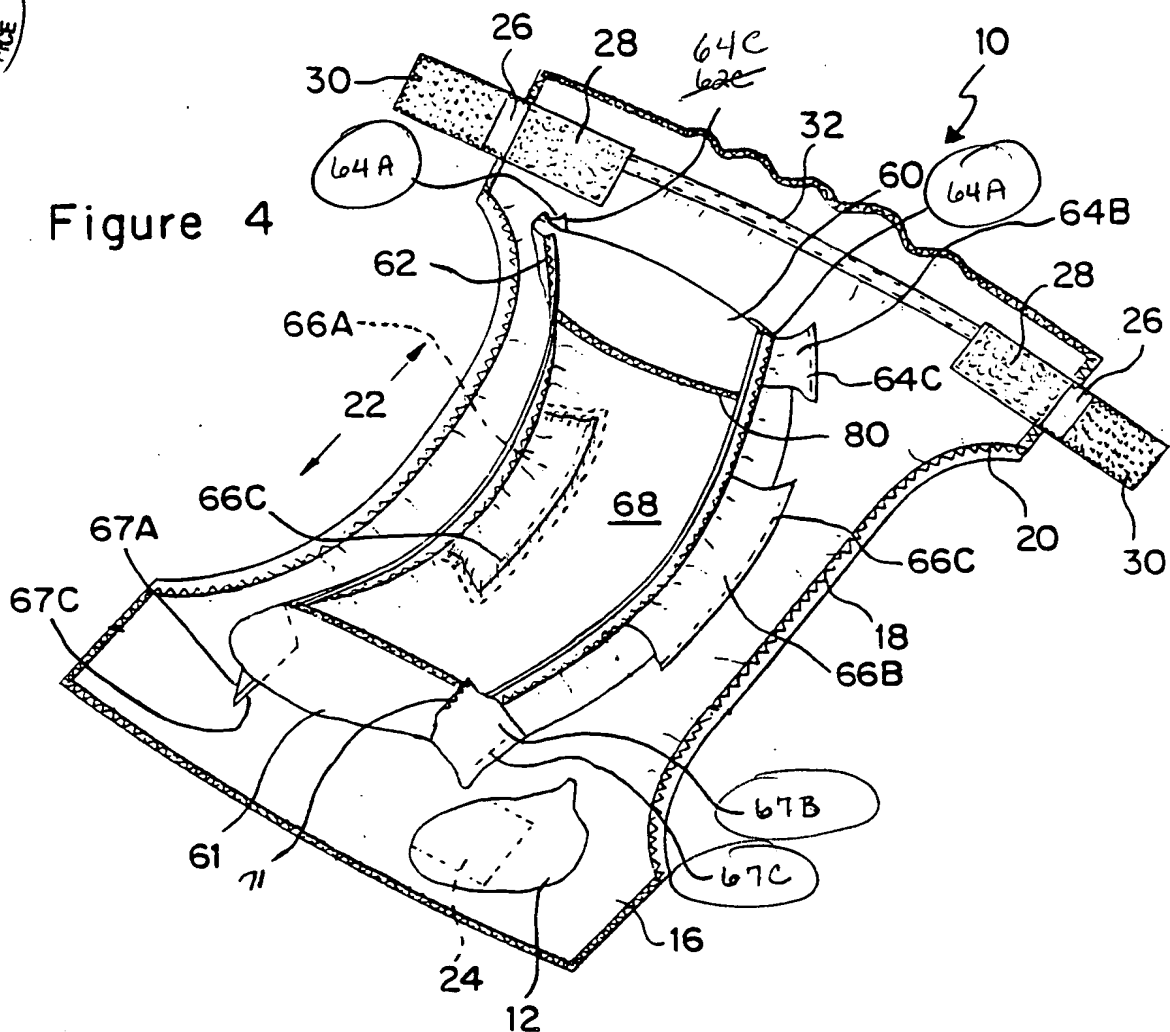


Figure 4A

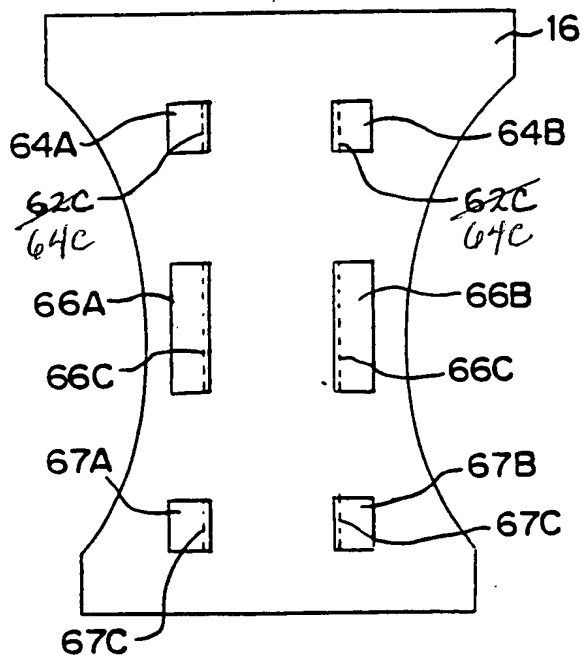


Figure 4B

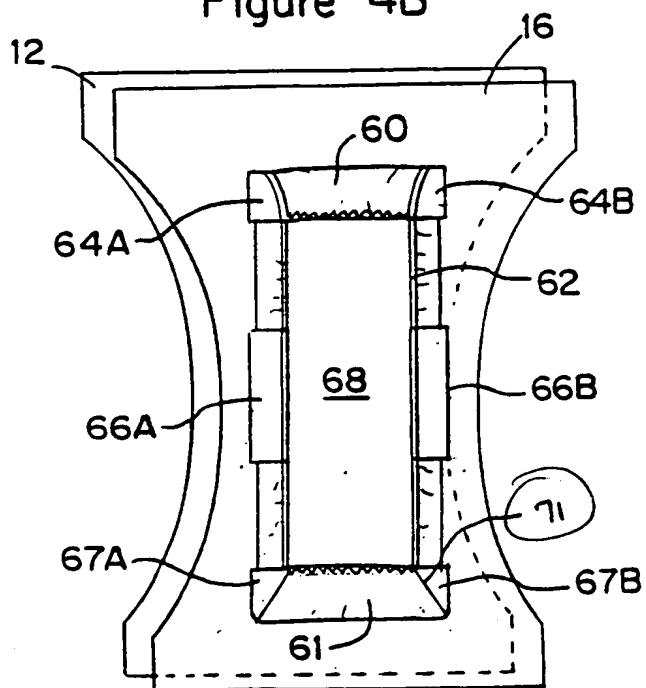


Figure 5

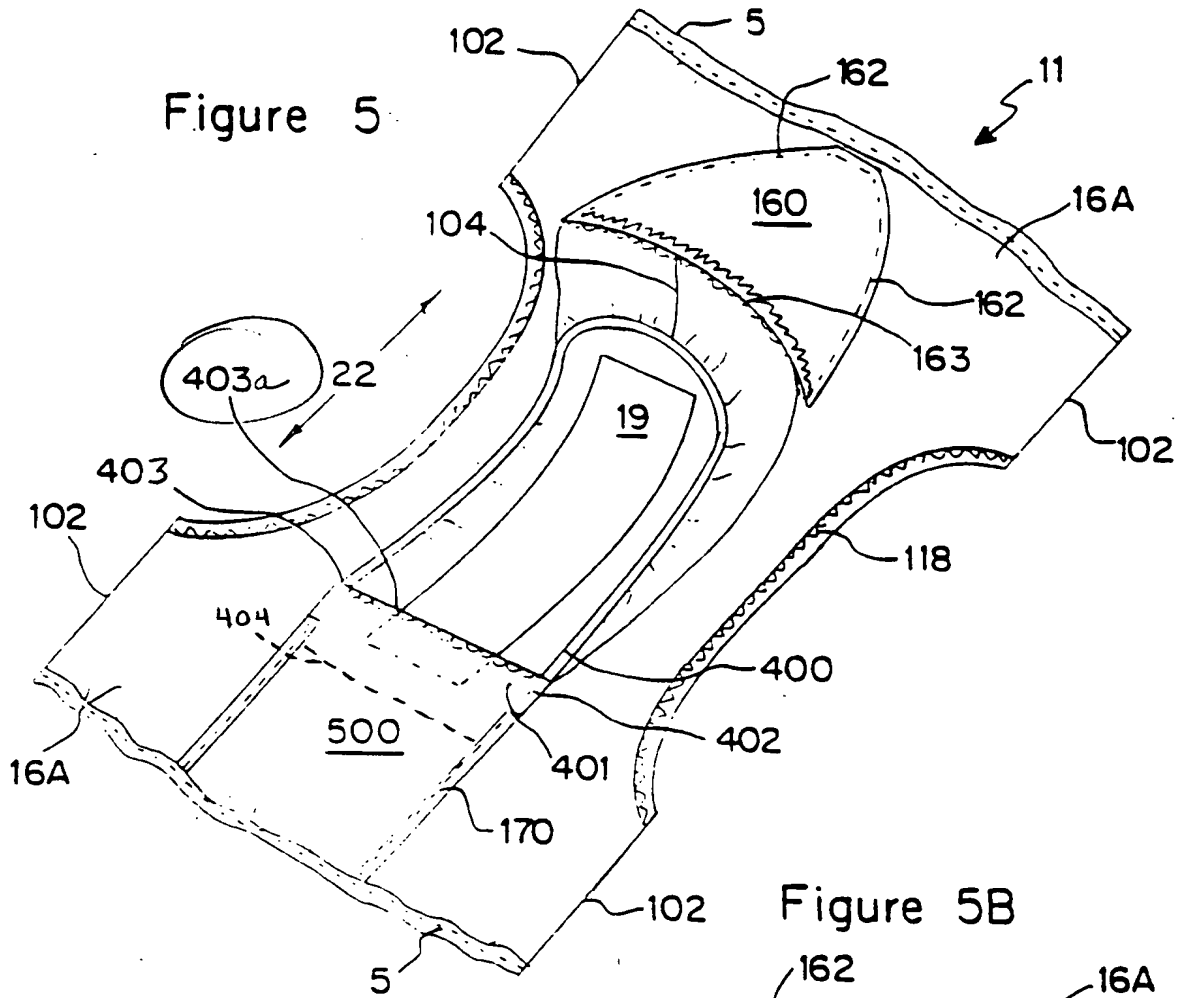


Figure 5B

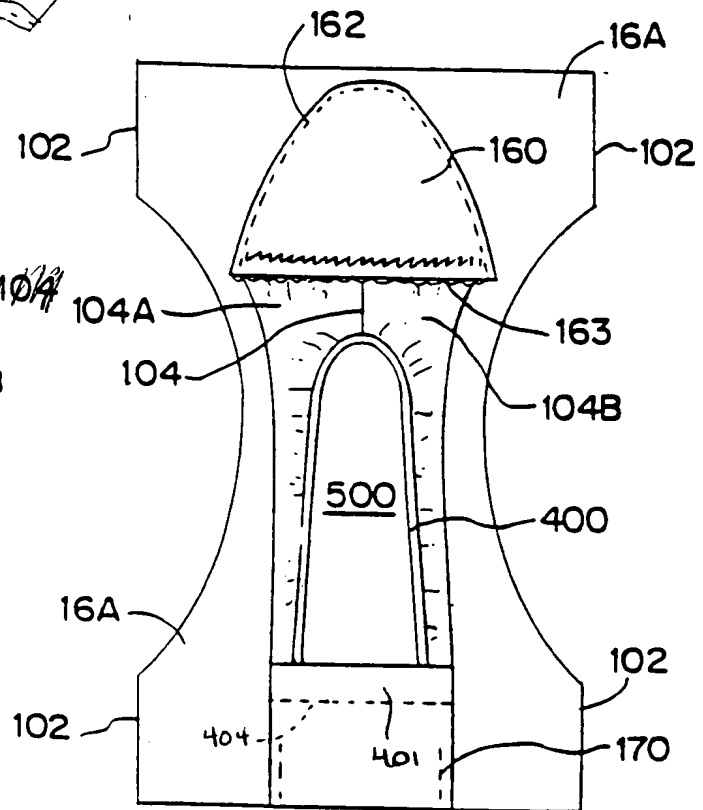


Figure 5A

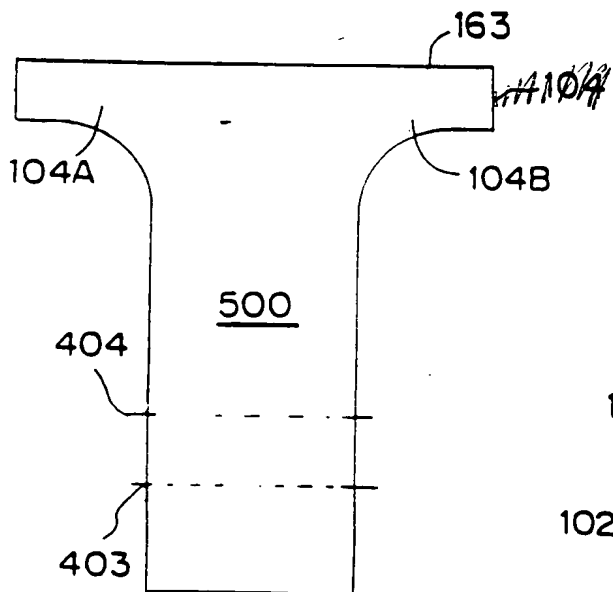


Figure 8

